

REMARKS

Claim 12 is now present in this application. Claims 9-11 and 13-16 have been canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claims 1-8 were previously canceled. Claim 12 is independent. Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Reasons for Entry of Amendments

At the outset, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered into the Official File in view of the fact that the amendments to the claims automatically place the application in condition for allowance.

In the alternative, if the Examiner does not agree that this application is in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered for the purpose of appeal. This Amendment reduces the issues on appeal by amending rewriting objected-to claim 12 in independent form. This Amendment was not presented at an earlier date in view of the fact that the Examiner has just now presented new grounds for rejection in this Final Office Action.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claim 12 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter in this application. In response, objected-to claim 12 has been rewritten in independent form.

Therefore independent claim 12 is now in condition for allowance

Examiner Interview

If, during further examination of the present application, a discussion with the Applicants' Representative would advance the prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Carl T. Thomsen, Registration No. 50,786, at 1-703-208-4030 (direct line) at his convenience.

Drawings

It is gratefully appreciated that the Examiner has accepted the drawings.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a)

Claims 9 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Tanaka et al. (U.S. 6,629,777);

claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Farquharson (U.S. 3,340,669);

claims 6-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Farquharson in view of Cope (U.S. 4,877,334); and

claims 11 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Farquharson.

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Arguments Regarding Independent Claim 12

As noted above, and while not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, objected-to claim 12 has been rewritten in independent form.

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Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 12 clearly defines the present invention over the references relied on by the Examiner, including Farquharson.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 are respectfully requested.

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Conclusion

All the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed and/or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently pending rejections and that they be withdrawn.

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and that as such, the Examiner is respectfully requested to send the application to Issue.

In the event there are any matters remaining in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Carl T. Thomsen, Registration No. 50,786 at (703) 205-4030 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: April 24, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

By 

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